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## Changing it Up — New Faces, New Directions at Weingut Wechsler

2022 has been a year of change. Organic certification, relaunch, and a new face in the management team. But also new markets, key constants, and watching change in one's own hometown. Embracing the familiar and the unexpected alike — anything but standing still.

Winegrower Katharina Wechsler came to the industry late, in her early thirties. From her parents' bulk wine production to successful self-marketing and steady rise into one of the most renowned estates in Rheinhessen. She took the reins in 2017 and transitioned the estate to organic starting in 2018. This year will see the next chapter in the story of Weingut Wechsler from Westhofen.

2021 was a highly emotional year for the young, organic estate. Plentiful rain, but also plentiful challenges in keeping the vines healthy. A harvest with

highs and lows. And ultimately a happy ending. What emerged was a vintage to quicken the pace of any vintner's heart: cool, low in alcohol, crisp acidity, and fine extract.

## Finding time for development, inspiration, and vision.

Katharina's partner Manuel Maier will join the estate's management team on April 1, 2022. The Stuttgart native has spent the previous 11 years as the general director at Wecause GmbH, a brand communication specialist. Beyond his love of wine and culinary pursuits, the 36-year-old brings to Westhofen new impulses and insights, as well as extensive management experience.

Manuel will be providing hands-on assistance in the vineyard and with marketing, even as he pushes modernization and sustainable redevelopment of the estate.

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Manuel: **„Our estate should be a place to discover more about the origins that shine through in our wines. It is a place to experience the wines in a sustainable way, and to see first-hand how we work with nature. We see our role as hosts as very important, even if it is only a small part of our work and at a low frequency.“**

For Katharina, the change brings a clearer focus on her work in the vineyards and in the cellar. She is concentrated on organic cultivation, healthy soils, and nurturing wines that express the character of their terroir. Given the estate's transition to organic and initial explorations with bio-dynamic cultivation, Wechsler sees even more chance to promote greater work in harmony with nature.

Katharina: **„We stand for living vineyards, authentic wines, and the unflagging courage to try something new. Together with Manuel and our team, we'll pursue this path with passion and steadfastness, and continue to define our own distinct wine style“**

The team is rounded out by Conner Münster. The certified sommelier joined the estate in summer 2020, supporting in the cellar while also overseeing private sales and the estate's online shop.

## Relaunch

2021 marked the first organic vintage. It also saw not only personnel growth, but also changes to the portfolio structure and visual look. Alongside a new categorization system, the labels now feature a new design including, for the first time, a rear label.

The **“Fan Base”** line will feature estate-level Gutswein and sparkling wines from the HU family. “Our Gutswein are more than just the bedrock of our portfolio. They are the gateway to our world. Through them, we explain who we are and the signature behind our wines.”

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 The natural wine line, **“Cloudy by Nature”**, continues to gain in importance, and is expanding as of the 2021 vintage. The “Cloudy by nature” family includes a number of big personalities: “Sexy MF,” “Fehlfarbe,” “PetNat,” and the latest addition: a “PinotNoir.” Unfiltered, uncomplicated, and always with a dab of funky.

The category **„Lage. Lage. Lage.“** puts the focus squarely on origin and terroir. It will be the home to the village-level Ortswein and single-site Lagenwine from Westhofen's well-known slate vineyards Benn, Kirchspiel, and Morstein. Riesling is the common thread — and always tastes of Westhofen.



## The Estate

Weingut Wechsler is found in Rheinhessen, in the historic town center of Westhofen. Its 17 hectares are cultivated organically. Limestone-rich soils shape the vineyards and wine style. The results: lively, expressive, and elegant wines that are pure pleasure to drink. The vineyard portfolio includes top sites such as Kirchspiel, Morstein, and the 6-hectare monopole site Benn. We translate ability, intuition, and trust into distinctiveness, elegance, and finesse. What moves Katharina & Manuel? The impressions we collect through travel, meeting people, and tasting wines from talented colleagues. Of sun, frost, wind, rain & hail. Of our estate as our happy place. Of living vineyards & authentic wines. Of friends, guests, culinary delights, music, and surprise encounters: the lovely adventure of finding the familiar and the unexpected in and through wine.

## Scores & Awards

“We've never been driven by points, yet we do enjoy the growing appreciation we've seen reflected in the scores and tastings over the years.” Alongside top marks from James Suckling for the Riesling Morstein 2020 (96 points) and Riesling Benn 2020 (95 points), the Kirchspiel in particular has proven a star performer. The Riesling earned 97 points, spot 55 on Germany's TOP 100 list and 9th place in a blind tasting of 300 top wines at the Feinschmecker Riesling Cup 2020.

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